relatively lower level of ambient light, the subsequent comparison should also indicate a relatively lower level of ambient light. Completing another comparison to confirm this assumption can be an undesirable use of the processor 14. The amount of time set by step 60 can be from one second to one minute, one minute to five minutes, or five minutes to one hour. Step 58 returns the processor 14 to step 40 of Fig. 3.

In the claims:

3. (Amended) The optical moisture detector of claim 1 further comprising:

timer means for selectively disabling the processor means from comparing the value to the predetermined value for a predetermined period of time.

6. (Amended) The optical moisture detector of claim 1 wherein the optical moisture sensor further comprises:

a CCD camera.

7. (Amended) The optical moisture detector of claim 1 wherein the optical moisture sensor further comprises:

a CMOS camera.

8. (Amended) The optical moisture detector of claim 1 wherein the optical moisture sensor further comprises:

a photo array having a plurality of dark pixels and a plurality of standard pixels.

10. The optical moisture detector of claim 1 wherein the processing means compares the absolute ambient light value to a plurality of predetermined values such that the processing means compares the absolute ambient light value to a first predetermined value to determine if a signal to turn on a light generating device

is to be sent, and compares the absolute ambient light value to a second
predetermined value to determine if a signal to turn off the light generating device is
to be sent.

13. (Amended) The optical moisture detector of claim 11 further
comprising:

timer means for selectively disabling the processor means from
comparing the value to the predetermined value for a predetermined period of time.

17. (Amended) A method of measuring ambient light conditions
comprising:

sensing the presence of moisture on a moisture collecting surface with
an optical moisture sensor, the sensor operable to emit a signal corresponding to
sensed conditions;

receiving the signal and determining an absolute ambient light value
corresponding to the existing ambient light conditions with processor means;

comparing the value to a predetermined value with the processor
means; and

emitting a control signal with the processor means if the value is less
than the predetermined value as a result of the comparing step.